A Guide for Assessing LGBTQ Inclusivity of Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs



What is Inclusivity?

LGBTQ inclusivity refers to the degree to which programs are sensitive toward, responsive to, and encompassing of, the diverse experiences and needs of LGBTQ youth and families. Inclusivity is best envisioned on a spectrum. On one end, at the most fundamental level, is an *inclusive* program, a program that has made efforts to include LGBTQ youth. On the other end is an *affirming* program, which validates, supports, respects, and values the identities of all youth.



Establishing an environment in which LGBTQ youth feel comfortable and valued is ultimately beneficial for *all* youth. For example, students of all sexual orientations and gender identities who receive LGBTQ-inclusive curricula in school report feeling safer in school and having a greater sense of belonging at school. While assessing how your organization is meeting the needs of LGBTQ youth may seem like an overwhelming task, the accompanying LGBTQ Inclusivity Assessment Tool for Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Programs is designed to help you to assess your program in the six key areas listed below.

Six LGBTQ Inclusivity Constructs

- Organizational policies and practices: the extent to which program participants, facilitators, and other staff are held responsible for their actions and statements regarding LGBTQ individuals
- 2. **Points of entry**: the avenues and means by which youth reach your program, including recruitment strategies (e.g., outreach materials), as well as the manner in which youth are greeted upon arrival
- 3. **Physical space**: the characteristics of the room(s) and building(s) in which your program takes place
- 4. **Staff competency**: a reflection of the cultural competence of the program facilitator(s) and other staff related to working with LGBTQ youth
- 5. <u>Language</u>: the terminology used both in the program materials and by the program facilitator(s)
- 6. <u>Content</u>: the accuracy and applicability of the program's material or subject matter to LGBTQ youth

¹ Bridge, H., K. Sinclair, C. Laub, S. T. Russell. 2012. *Lessons that matter: LGBTQ inclusivity and school safety.* (Gay-Straight Alliance Network and California Safe Schools Coalition Research Brief No. 14.) San Francisco, CA: Gay-Straight Alliance Network.



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Assessing TPP Programs for LGBTQ Inclusivity

The Office of Adolescent Health (OAH) TPP grantees are expected to review all program materials for use in the project for inclusivity of LGBTQ youth prior to use in the grant. Grantees inform OAH of their review process, results, and changes made to ensure that all materials are inclusive of

LGBTQ youth. The process and accompanying tool in this guide was developed to assist grantees in fulfilling this requirement. While no formal, validated tool currently exists for assessing LGBTQ inclusivity, there is consensus among experts in the field about the major constructs to consider.

Assessing your TPP program's level of LGBTQ inclusivity involves more than a cursory review of the content of curriculum and materials. It involves a thorough examination of a variety of programmatic elements, including staff competency, organizational policies and practices, language and terminology, implicit assumptions, and program content.

Your TPP program includes more than just the curriculum (or curricula) you have selected to implement. It refers to your organization's broader teen pregnancy prevention efforts, including outreach, staffing, physical location, and more. Your assessment of LGBTQ inclusivity should consider all elements of your TPP program, not just the curriculum you are implementing.



Based on the available research and expert feedback, OAH developed an assessment tool to enable grantees to assess the LGBTQ inclusivity of the various elements of their TPP programs. The tool, which can be found on page seven of this document, covers each of the six constructs outlined previously. This assessment tool provides a series of questions designed to help grantees assess the degree to which your TPP program is inclusive and affirming of LGBTQ youth. Grantees should use the tool to (1) determine areas where they are doing well; and (2) identify areas where improvements can be made to make their TPP program and its implementation inclusive and affirming of LGBTQ youth. At the end of this guide, you will find a list of additional resources that may be helpful as you through this process.

In this guide, we have broken down the process of assessing a TPP program for LGBTQ inclusivity into three phases. The amount of time you spend on each phase will depend on what your organization already does to ensure that your programs are responsive to the needs of LGBTQ youth, as well as the length and number of the curricula under consideration. Grantees should plan to reassess their program's inclusivity on an annual basis and make continuous quality improvements as needed to ensure their programs are inclusive and affirming.

Process for Assessing TPP Programs for Inclusivity

Phase 1: Getting Started

The goal of this phase is to identify the individuals including a program review coordinator and a review committee — who will conduct the assessment. The program review coordinator should orient committee members to their roles, the assessment tool (located at the end of this guide), the TPP program, and the curriculum (or curricula). All committee members should also spend time becoming familiar with the needs of LGBTQ youth in the community served.

Phase 2: Assessing Your Program's Inclusivity

The goal of this phase is to review organizational policies and practices, as well as the content and materials of the curriculum (or curricula) under consideration. While assessments for medical accuracy or age appropriateness tend to focus on TPP curricula and materials, it is essential that an assessment of LGBTQ inclusivity includes a review of organizational policies, practices, and staff professional development.

Phase 3: Determining Needed Modifications

The goal of this phase is to review the results of the assessment and determine where improvements are needed to make the program inclusive. Recommendations could include adaptations to the TPP curricula and/or materials, as well as drafting or revising organizational policies and identifying professional development priorities for staff.



Phase 1: Getting Started

When selecting a program review coordinator, be sure to identify an individual who is comfortable organizing meetings and following up with committee members to make sure that tasks are accomplished in a timely manner. The coordinator should be a staff member at the OAH-funded grantee organization who is familiar with the policies and practices of the organization(s) implementing the program and with the TPP curriculum (or curricula) under consideration. Ideally, this person would also be familiar and comfortable with the needs of LGBTQ youth in the community served (or at least be willing to spend additional time acquiring this knowledge prior to the review).

The program review coordinator will begin by assembling background information to inform the review including (at a minimum):

- Needs assessment results from the community served
- Overall goals of the organization's TPP program
- A general description of the TPP curriculum (or curricula) being considered
- Description of the target population
- Description of the implementation setting(s)
- Comparison of curriculum content with local requirements related to sexual health education
- Organizational policies and practices pertaining to LGBTQ individuals and topics
- Professional development plans for staff

The program review coordinator will then identify members (between three and eight total) to serve on a review committee and orient them to their roles and responsibilities. Since TPP grantees are required to assess their curricula and materials for a number of other criteria (e.g., cultural and linguistic appropriateness, age-appropriateness, medical accuracy), you can streamline the review process by including individuals with expertise in multiple content areas in order to conduct multiple reviews simultaneously. The committee members should begin by familiarizing themselves with the background information provided by the coordinator, as well as key terms and concepts related to gender identity and sexual orientation. The resource list at the conclusion of this guide provides several resources that may be useful with this task.

Review Committee Members

The program review committee should consist of three to eight individuals who are familiar with the needs of LGBTQ youth in your community. Examples of potential committee members include:

- LGBTQ youth
- Parents (especially parents of LGBTQ youth)
- Local service providers that work with LGBTQ youth
- Individuals who are familiar with the needs of LGBTQ youth in the community (school staff, local service providers, etc.)
- Grantee staff with experience working with LGBTQ youth

The HECAT General
Curriculum Information
form can be used to
develop a general
description of the
curriculum.



Phase 2: Assessing Your Program's Inclusivity

The LGBTQ Inclusivity Assessment Tool for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs is intended to serve as a guide to assess your program's policies, practices and program materials as they relate to meeting the needs of LGBTQ youth.

The scoring criteria in the assessment tool include the following response options:

- Describes us well
- Almost there
- Just getting started
- Does not describe us

Remember, inclusivity is best conceptualized as a spectrum. When responding to the questions in the assessment, consider the *degree to which* your program meets the standard denoted. Be as honest and precise as possible in your assessments of each of the indicators listed for each construct, so that you can accurately assess your program and develop a set of relevant and realistic priorities.

Scoring Example

Assessment item: All staff (regardless of status/rank, previous experience, or expertise) participate together in regular trainings on <u>sexual orientation</u> issues so that they share a common understanding and can support one another.

- **Describes us well** you might select this response if your organization provides ongoing professional development on how to meet the needs of LGBTQ youth.
- Almost there you might select this response if your organization offers training on how to meet the needs of LGBTQ youth for all staff when they are hired, but does not provide on-going professional development.
- **Just getting started** you might select this response if your organization recently established a policy regarding on-going professional development related to meeting the needs of LGBTQ youth but have not yet conducted any training.
- **Does not describe us** you might select this response if your organization does not offer any training in how to meet the needs of LGBTQ youth.



Phase 3: Determining Needed Modifications

Now that you have given considerable thought to the various dimensions that comprise LGBTQ inclusivity, it is time to determine how you might go about creating a more inclusive and affirming program for the youth and families you serve. You should review the results of the assessment to identify areas where you've already taken steps to make your TPP program inclusive (and should continue), as well as areas where improvements are needed to ensure the program is inclusive. Grantees are expected to make modifications to their program to ensure inclusivity of LGBTQ youth and families based on the results of the assessment, and to repeat the assessment on an annual basis

to ensure your program meets the needs of LGBTQ youth and families.

Examples of possible modifications include:

- Revising recruitment and program materials and procedures used at point of entry (e.g., revising images on outreach fliers, recruiting at LGBTQ youth-serving programs).
- Revising program language and terminology within the TPP program curricula and materials (e.g., using gender-neutral language in role plays).



- Adding lessons or materials that specifically acknowledge and respond to the sexual health needs and perspectives of LGBTQ youth (e.g., discussing the effects of anti-LGBTQ harassment and bullying).
- Providing training and professional development opportunities to improve program staff attitudes and skills (e.g., trainings that help staff identify and address their own implicit biases related to LGBTQ individuals).

When assessing specific TPP evidence-based program (EBP) curricula, you may choose to work with other grantees considering the same EBP to determine needed adaptations. All proposed adaptations must be shared with OAH, and all major adaptations must be approved by OAH prior to implementation. In addition, there should be a plan to pilot the adaptations prior to full implementation to ensure that the adaptations adequately address the committee's concerns related to the LGBTQ inclusivity of the materials.

Additions may be considered <u>minor adaptations</u> (e.g., adding icebreakers or a reproductive health session) or <u>major adaptations</u> (e.g., combining elements of another program with the EBP). Some additions are not considered adaptations because they are implemented to support the program and do not affect the program content or delivery (e.g., providing snacks, marketing the program, informing parents about the program). All potential adaptations should be discussed with your PO.



LGBTQ Inclusivity Assessment Tool for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs

OAH TPP grantees are expected to review all program materials for use in the project for inclusivity of LGBTQ youth prior to use in the grant. Grantees should inform OAH of their review process, results, and changes made to ensure that all materials are inclusive of LGBTQ youth. The Assessment Guide and this tool will assist you in fulfilling this requirement.

Six LGBTQ Inclusivity Constructs

- 1. Organizational policies and practices
- 2. Points of entry
- 3. Physical space
- 4. Staff competency
- 5. Language
- 6. Content

Organizational Policies and Practices (12 items)

fa	ganizational Policies and Practices reflect the extent to which program participants, cilitators, and other staff are held responsible for their actions and statements regarding GBTQ individuals.	Describes us well	Almost there	Just getting started	Doesn't describe us
Re	eferrals				
1.	The organizations included on our referral list are inclusive of LGBTQ youth.				
2.	Our referral list includes organizations that specifically focus on meeting the needs of LGBTQ youth.				
Aı	nti-discrimination Policy				
 3. 4. 	Our organization has, and periodically updates, an <u>anti-discrimination policy</u> that protects program staff and participants from discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, as well as age, disability, sex, race/ethnicity, color, national origin, and religion. Our organization's <u>anti-discrimination policy</u> is consistently enforced.				
5.	Our organization makes a concerted effort to make all program staff and participants aware of the <u>anti-discrimination policies</u> (e.g., by posting them somewhere clearly visible and educating new staff and program participants about the policies).				



LGBTQ Inclusivity Assessment Tool for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs

fa	rganizational Policies and Practices reflect the extent to which program participants, cilitators, and other staff are held responsible for their actions and statements regarding GBTQ individuals.	Describes us well	Almost there	Just getting started	Doesn't describe us
Aı	nti-bullying and Harassment Policy				
	Our organization has, and periodically updates, <u>policies related to bullying and harassment</u> that protect individuals from inappropriate conduct that is based on sexual orientation or gender identity, as well as age, disability, sex, race/ethnicity, color, class, national origin, and religion. Our organization's <u>anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies</u> are consistently enforced.				
8.	Our organization makes a concerted effort to make all program staff and participants aware of our <u>anti-bullying and harassment policies</u> (e.g., by posting them somewhere clearly visible and educating new staff and program participants about the policies).				
St	aff Responses to Bullying and Harassment				
9.	Our staff take the time to work with youth to develop and establish group rules, norms, and expectations that explicitly address discrimination, harassment and bullying based on gender identity or sexual orientation as well as negative language about persons who identify as LGBTQ. Our staff consistently enforce the expectations established by these group rules or norms, as well as the broader organizational anti-discrimination, anti-bullying, and anti-harassment policies.				
Y	outh Accountability				
	. Staff recognize and encourage youth efforts to address anti-LGBTQ bullying, harassment, or negative comments. 2. Staff respond in an open and receptive manner when youth hold staff members accountable for their use of discriminatory language or lack of consistency in enforcing anti-discrimination, anti-bullying, and anti-harassment policies.				



LGBTQ Inclusivity Assessment Tool for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs Points of Entry (8 items)

inc	ints of entry include the avenues and means by which youth get to your program, luding recruitment strategies (e.g., outreach materials), as well as the manner in which uth are greeted upon arrival.	Describes us well	Almost there	Just getting started	Doesn't describe us
Ou	treach Materials				
1.	Our outreach materials include positive images and representations of LGBTQ individuals.				
2.	Our outreach materials include positive references to diverse sexual orientations and gender identities and relationship types.				
Ou	treach to and Engagement of Youth				
3.	All youth are greeted warmly upon entry.				
4.	Our outreach workers discuss LGBTQ people and non-heterosexual relationships in a positive manner with all youth.				
5.	Our outreach plan includes recruitment from and/or work with LGBTQ organizations and clubs.				
Pro	ogram Forms				
6.	Our program forms (e.g. applications, enrollment forms, etc.) completed by the youth contain multiple options for gender.				
7.	Our program forms contain a space for youth to write both their legal name and the name they wish to be called in the program.				
8.	Our program forms ask the youth to specify the pronouns they use to describe themselves.				



LGBTQ Inclusivity Assessment Tool for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs Physical Space* (4 items)

Physical space includes the characteristics of the room(s) and building(s) in which your program takes place.	Describes us well	Almost there	Just getting started	Doesn't describe us
Inclusive Images				
 Posters and other images on the walls represent a diverse group of youth, including LGBTQ youth. 				
Posters and other images that represent LGBTQ youth include individuals of various racial and ethnic groups.				
Posted Expectations				
 Posters and other displayed signs explicitly prohibit bullying and harassment and promote respect for diversity (e.g. signs include phrases like "safe zone," "I am an ally," or other messages that convey acceptance and support for LGBTQ youth). 				
Restroom Facilities				
4. The space contains gender-neutral, single-stall restrooms that provide privacy and respect for all youth OR has a visible written policy (or one that is verbally reviewed during each session) that does not force a youth to use a restroom that conflicts with the youth's gender identity.				

Staff Competency (10 items)

Staff competency is a reflection of the cultural competence of the program facilitator(s) and other staff related to working with LGBTQ youth.	Describes us well	Almost there	Just getting started	Doesn't describe us
Staff Orientation				
 New staff receive training on strategies for creating a safe and supportive environment for LGBTQ youth prior to working with youth. 				

^{*}You may be implementing in a space that is not part of your organization and therefore you may feel as if you unable to "control" the extent to which the space is inclusive. If this is the case, consider how you may educate the site or organization to become more inclusive.



LGBTQ Inclusivity Assessment Tool for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs

	taff competency is a reflection of the cultural competence of the program facilitator(s) and her staff related to working with LGBTQ youth.	Describes us well	Almost there	Just getting started	Doesn't describe us
0	ngoing Training				
2.	All staff (regardless of status/rank, previous experience, or expertise) participate together in regular trainings on <u>sexual orientation</u> issues so that they share a common understanding and can support one another.				
3.	All staff participate together in regular trainings on gender identity issues so that they share a common understanding and can support one another.				
	All staff receive training on TPP risk factors specific to LGBTQ youth (e.g., stigma and harassment, effective use of contraceptives in non-heterosexual relationships).				
5.	Classroom management training covers means by which to redirect anti-LGBTQ behavior or sentiments.				
6.	All staff receive ongoing support and feedback from direct supervisors on ways to model inclusive and affirming skills and behaviors.				
A	ddressing Biases				
7.	Staff have multiple opportunities (through formal training and supervision) to discuss the role of personal biases in working with LGBTQ youth.				
8.	Staff are supported in addressing their own biases regarding LGBTQ youth.				
Н	iring				
9.	youth attending our program.				
L	GBTQ Role Models				
10	Our program makes an effort to expose youth to positive LGBTQ role models by actively supporting openly LGBTQ staff and/or through literature, movies, music, or inviting guest speakers or connecting youth to LGBTQ programs in the community.				



LGBTQ Inclusivity Assessment Tool for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs Language (11 items)

Language refers to the terminology used in both the program materials and by the program facilitator(s).	Describes us well	Almost there	Just getting started	Doesn't describe us
Gender-neutral Terminology				
 Program <u>staff</u> use gender-neutral terms or confirm with youth which pronouns they prefer rather than make assumptions based on appearance or some other characteristic. Program <u>staff</u> use terms like "everyone," rather than "ladies" or "boys" during group discussions/activities. 				
3. Program <u>materials</u> (e.g., videos, handouts, lessons, pre- and post-tests) use terms like "everyone," rather than "ladies" or "boys."				
4. Program staff use terms like "partner," "spouse," or "significant other" rather than "boyfriend" or "wife" when discussing relationships.				
5. Program <u>materials</u> use terms like "partner," "spouse," or "significant other" rather than "boyfriend" or "wife" when discussing relationships.				
Posted Expectations				
Program staff use gender-neutral and inclusive language during all interactions with youth and colleagues, not just during program activities.				
 Program staff support one another in consistently using gender-neutral and inclusive language by checking-in with their colleagues when they are unsure and making suggestions when they observe a missed opportunity. 				
Anatomy				
8. Program staff use gender-neutral terms when discussing body parts and sexual behavior (e.g., "a penis" rather than "a man's penis").				
9. Program <u>materials</u> use gender-neutral terms when discussing body parts and/or the owners of those body parts (e.g., "a penis" rather than "a man's penis").				
10. Program <u>staff</u> discuss alternative, gender neutral terms for birth control/prophylactics (e.g., "external" condom also known as the "male" condom).				
11. Program <u>materials</u> offer alternative, gender-neutral terms in addition to medically accurate terms when discussing birth control/prophylactics (e.g., female condom may also be referred to as an "internal" condom).				

LGBTQ Inclusivity Assessment Tool for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs Program Content (6 items)

Program content pertains to the accuracy and applicability of the program's actual substance or subject matter to LGBTQ youth.	Describes us well	Almost there	Just getting started	Doesn't describe us
Positive LGBTQ Portrayals				
 Program materials (e.g., videos, handouts) and/or activities (e.g., role plays) include positive examples of diverse LGBTQ relationships. 				
2. Program materials focus on high-risk behaviors as opposed to labeling people or populations as high-risk.				
LGBTQ-relevant Information				
3. Program materials address the specific sexual health needs of LGBTQ youth (e.g., the role of stigma and discrimination in health disparities).				
4. Program materials acknowledge that not all safer sex methods will work in the same ways for same-sex partners or transgender people (e.g., transgender people who have accessed hormon or surgical interventions as part of a medical transition).	al			
5. Program materials discuss pregnancy risk for all youth, including LGBTQ youth, and help youth assess risk based on their behaviors as opposed to their gender identities and sexual orientation	S.			
LGBTQ Diversity				
Program materials include diverse representations of LGBTQ youth (e.g., race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ability, age, religion, color).				



Resources to Assist with a Review of LGBTQ Inclusivity

- LGB Youth: Challenges, Risk and Protective Factors (tip sheet)
 http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah initiatives/teen pregnancy/training/tip sheets/lgb-youth-508.pdf
- Voices from the Field: LGBT-Friendly Teen Pregnancy Prevention (podcast)
 http://ncfy.acf.hhs.gov/media-center/podcasts/voices-field-lgbt-friendly-teen-pregnancy-prevention
- Creating a Safe Space for LGBTQ Teens (online course)
 http://ncfv-learn.ibsinternational.com/course/index.php?categorvid=12
- Left Out: LGBTQ Inclusivity in Sex Education (presentation)
 http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah initiatives/teen_pregnancy/training/Assests/inclusive_forall.pdf
- Understanding LGBTQ Youth & Ensuring Inclusivity in Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs (info sheet) http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/assets/tpp-grantee-orientation/understanding-lgbtq-youth.pdf
- Why LGBTQ Inclusivity Matters & How to Get Started (webinar)
 http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah initiatives/teen_pregnancy/resources/webinars.html
- Youth.gov (website)
 http://www.youth.gov/youth-topics/lgbtq-youth
- A Practical Guide for Creating Safe and Supportive Environments in Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs (tip sheet) http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah- initiatives/assets/ta 9 safe and supportive environments.pdf
- Find additional resources on the TPP Resource Center (website)
 http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah initiatives/teen_pregnancy/training/engaging-select-populations.html#lgbtq

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